At present, there is no proposal to set up more IITs in the country.

[English]

Hepatitis-G Virus

2237. SHRI SATYAJITSINH DULIPSINH GAEKWAD : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item caption "Killer Virus Hepatitis-G in India" appearing in the "Asian Age" deated December 17, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) whether the killer virus has been found blood borne, if so, the extent to which this virus has spread indicating the number of parsons found infected with the virus;

(e) whether any specific section of people, age group, class or vocation have been identified as vulnerable to and carriers of this virus, if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the main causes to which the virus or the spread of it is traced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) Government is aware of the news reports regarding Hepatitis-G Virus (HGV) infection in India.

(b) to (f) The transmission of HGV through blood transfusion and by other parenteral routes of exposure, such as through intravenous drug use, have been clearly established. A study conducted by medical scientists in AIIMS, New Delhi reported 2 out of 16 patients with acute and chronic cases of liver failure as positive for the infection. HGV genome was also detected in two patients with P. falciparum infection. More detailed studies are necessary to determine the disease dimension in the country.

Rehabilitation of People of Indian Origin in Hong Kong

2238. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to take appropriate action to reinstate the people of Indian origin becoming Stateless in Hong Kong after its transfer to China; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) and (b) According to statistics released by the Immigration Department of Hong Kong, the number of persons of Indian origin who are permanent residents of Hong Kong and who hold British Dependent Territories Citizens (BDTC) or British National Overseas (BN(O)) passports but do not have any other nationality is approximately 3,200.

It has been the consistent position of the Government of India that the British Government has basic responsibility towards BDTC and BN(O) passport holders and that it should take british citizens. The British Government has announced on 4.2.1997 that solely British ethnic minorities residing in Hong Kong could apply for registration as British citizens, giving them right of abode in the United Kingdom, after 30th June, 1997. It is expected that, following this announcement, most Indians holding BDTC and BN(O) passports, but not having any other nationality, would qualify to apply for registration as British citizens.

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

2239. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the German Foreign Minister Mr. Klaus Kinkel during his recent visit to India, called upon India to join the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty;

(b) if so, in what precise terms this suggestion was made; and

(c) reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Dr. Kinkel conveyed that it would be desirable if India signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). However, he appreciated India's position on the Treaty.

(c) External Affairs Minister categorically conveyed to the German Foreign Minister that India would not now or later sign the CTBT and the NPT in their present form. India's stand on the CTBT has been principled and consistent. India believes that the CTBT should be an integral part of a nuclear disarmament process leading to total elimination of nuclear weapons within a timebound framework.

Flood Control

2240. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO :
DR. G.R. SARODE :

Will be Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) the details of different flood prone areas in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether any survey has been made to ascertain the causes of floods in these areas;

(c) if so, the details therof;

(d) the funds allocation made for flood control during the Eighth Plan and Ninth Plan, State-wise;